IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (currently amended) A method of selling products online by a plurality of stores based on a product catalog that comprises information on a plurality of products, the method comprising:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> in each store, ~~the~~<u>a</u> ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> being a product that is out of stock; and

when a purchaser selects <u>a</u>~~the~~ ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> from the product catalog of one store, introducing the purchaser to another store in which the product selected by the purchaser is available; and

updating the information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> in each store using selection of a product catalog by a purchaser as a trigger.

2. (canceled)

3. (previously presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising managing information regarding stock shortage products for each store, the stock shortage product being a product that is out of stock in one particular store but that is available in another store,

wherein the purchaser is introducing to another store based on the information regarding the stock shortage products.

4. (previously presented) The method according to claim 3, further comprising updating the information regarding the stock shortage products for each store using selection of a product from the product catalog by the purchaser as a trigger.

5. (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising payment of fee by the another store to which the purchaser has been introduced to the store

from whose product catalog the purchaser has selected the ~~non-available~~ product that is not in inventory.

6.   (currently amended) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

placing an order for the ~~non-available~~ product that is not in inventory that has been selected by the purchaser to a manufacturer; and

selecting one step out of the step of placing the order to the manufacturer and the step of introducing the purchaser to another store.

7.   (currently amended) A method of selling products online by a plurality of stores based on a product catalog that comprises information on a plurality of products, the method comprising:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products that are not in inventory in each store, ~~the~~a ~~non-available~~ product that is not in inventory being a product that is out of stock; and

performing a shipment process of ordering the product selected by a purchaser from another store in which the product is available to a store in which the product is ~~non-available~~ not in inventory when the purchaser selects ~~a~~the ~~non-available~~ product that is not in inventory from the product catalog of one store.

8.   (previously presented) The method according to claim 7, further comprising managing information regarding stock shortage products for each store, the stock shortage product being a product that is out of stock in one particular store but that is available in another store; and

performing shipping processing of ordering the product from the another store based on the information regarding the stock shortage products.

9.   (currently amended) A computer program executing a method of selling products online, the computer program:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products that are not in inventory for a plurality of stores; and

introducing a purchaser to a second store in which a product selected by a purchaser is available when the purchaser selects a ~~non-available~~ product that is not in inventory from a catalog of a first store.

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10.   (currently amended) A computer program executing a method of selling products online, the computer program:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> for a plurality of stores; and

shipping a product selected by a purchaser from a second store in which the product selected by the purchaser is available when a purchaser selects a ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> from a catalog of a first store.

11.   (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium configured to store therein a computer program that implements on a computer a method of selling products online by a plurality of stores based on a product catalog that comprises information on a plurality of products, the computer program causing the computer to execute:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> in each store, the ~~non-available being a~~ product<u>s</u> <u>being</u> ~~that is~~ out of stock;

when a purchaser selects a ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> from the product catalog of one store, introducing the purchaser to another store in which the product selected by the purchaser is available; and

updating the information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> in each store using selection of a product from the product catalog by a purchaser as a trigger.

12.   (currently amended) A computer-readable recording medium configured to store therein a computer program that implements on a computer a method of selling products online by a plurality of stores based on a product catalog that comprises information on a plurality of products, the computer program causing the computer to execute:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> in each store, ~~the~~<u>a</u> ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> being a product that is out of stock; and

performing a shipment process of ordering the product selected by a purchaser from another store in which the product is available when the purchaser selects a<u>the</u> ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> from the catalog of one store.

13.   (currently amended) A method of selling products online, comprising:

managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> for a plurality of stores; and

introducing a purchaser to a second store in which a product selected by a

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purchaser is available when the purchaser selects a ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> from a catalog of a first store.

    14.   (currently amended) A method of selling products online, comprising:

    managing information regarding ~~non-available~~ products <u>that are not in inventory</u> for a plurality of stores; and

    shipping a product selected by a purchaser from a second store in which the product selected by the purchaser is available when a purchaser selects a ~~non-available~~ product <u>that is not in inventory</u> from a catalog of a first store.